

Application No.: 10/574,651
Art Unit: 3656

Amendment under 37 C.F.R. §1.111
Attorney Docket No.: 062329

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached five (5) sheets of drawings include changes to Figs.1-4 and 8. No new matter has been added

REMARKS

The claims have been amended as set forth above. Claim 2 has been cancelled without prejudice. Accordingly, claims 1 and 3-8 remain for consideration in this application.

Figures 1-4 are objected to because they should be designated as “Prior Art”.

Accordingly, attached hereto are copies of Figures 1-4 which have now been properly labeled as “Prior Art”. Additionally, Figure 8 has been amended in order to correct a formal error. Reference numeral 55 has been replaced with reference numeral 25. No new matter has been added to the corrected drawings.

Claims 1-5, 7 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Agari (USP 5,360,271).

Agari provides for an under seal device for a linear motion guide unit. In Agari, an under seal 13 consists of an underside core member 27 having engagement portions 30 and a resilient underside member 28. The under seal 13 is not secured to the casing 2 or the end cap 5 in order not to deform or buckle because of differences in thermal expansion between it and the casing 2 and the end cap 5. (See column 6, lines 64-69.) Under seal 13 includes a metal core member 27 and a resilient underside member 28 fixed thereto. The under seal 13 is clipped onto the end core members 29 of end seal 19.

As noted above, claim 2 has been cancelled without prejudice. The features of claim 2 have been incorporated into independent claim 1. Additional features have also been added in claim 1. Claim 1 now recites in part:

said foreign matter entry preventing plates each having a length equal to a distance between outermost ones of said attachment devices, which are disposed outermost in the direction of relative movement of said moving block, said foreign matter entry preventing plates having their opposite ends secured to the outermost ones of said attachment devices.

Accordingly, as set forth above, the foreign matter entry preventing plates each have a length which is “equal to a distance between outermost ones of said attachment devices”, and further wherein the foreign matter entry preventing plates have their opposite ends which are “secured to the outermost ones of said attachment devices.”

The above recited arrangement, set forth in amended claim 1, allows the foreign matter entry preventing plates to be securely fixed to the outermost “attachment devices”. Please see paragraphs [0032] and [0033] for a more detailed description. An illustration of this structure is seen in Figure 8, in which foreign matter entry prevention plates 34 are fixed by screws 44 to the “outermost” attachment devices (metal scrapers 26, 26). This claimed structure provides a following advantage described in the specification on page 16, lines 21-24:

With this arrangement, there is no possibility of the end portions of the foreign matter entry preventing plates 34 vibrating or being displaced.

As described above, because of the claimed structure, there is no possibility of the end portions of the foreign matter entry preventing plates from vibrating or being displaced. This is

true, particularly when the foreign matter entry preventing plates are very thin, and thus the opposite ends of a plate of the prior art may be vibrated or displaced loose by the movement and the vibration of the moving block. Accordingly, the vibration and displacement can be prevented by securing the opposite ends of the foreign matter entry preventing plates to the “outermost...attachment devices”. This provides a strong seal to prevent entry of foreign matter into the moving block, end plates and attachment devices, such as lubricators, which are located between the “outermost...attachment devices”.

Additionally, in some cases it may be difficult to secure the foreign matter entry preventing plate to end surfaces (lower portions of a skirt portion of a moving block) on both sides of the moving block body, because gaps between end surfaces (or lower portions) of the skirt portions of the moving block body and the base surface to which the track rail is secured are very small. In such cases the foreign matter entry preventing plates can easily be installed by securing opposite ends thereof to the “outermost... attachment devices.”

Agari does not disclose the claimed features as described above. Neither core member 27 nor resilient underside member 28 are secured to the “outermost...attachment device” (resilient end member 31). Furthermore, Agari does not disclose a “lubricator” mounted astride said track rail. Although the Office Action suggests that, regarding claim 2 (now incorporated into claim1), nipple 18 is the same as the claimed lubricators of previous claim 2. However, amended claim 1 recites a “plurality of attachment devices” outside of the end plates. Fig. 5 of Agari only shows the grease nipple 18, not a plurality of “attachment devices”. Furthermore, the recited attachment devices of amended claim 1 must be “mounted astride said track rail and secured to outer ends of

said end plates”. As noted, the grease nipple 18 of Fig. 5 is the only attachment to end cap 5, and it is not mounted astride the track rail.

Accordingly, amended claim 1 is not anticipated by Agari, because Agari does not disclose each and every feature set forth in claim 1, as noted above.

Regarding claim 3, in fact, the under seal 13 of Agari, as illustrated in Fig. 4 is attached to end core member 29 thereof by way of engagement portion 30. Accordingly, it is not secured to the skirt portions of the moving block body. Furthermore, claim 3 is dependent from claim 1 and limited to the additional features set forth therein.

Regarding claim 4, Agari discloses no structure in which there are attachment devices which have “metal scrapers and formed from metal plates”. Furthermore, claim 4 is dependent from claim 1 and limited to the additional features set forth therein.

Claims 1 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Osawa (USP 5,553,944).

Osawa discloses a slider 2 on a track rail 1, wherein a sleeve portion 4 of the slider has a step portion 13 for receiving an under seal. The under seal 40 has a core bar 41 and a resilient body 42, as shown in Fig. 6. Resilient body 42 includes a thick wall portion 43 and a thin wall portion 44. As noted in column 2, lines 28-31, the under seal is “attached to the end caps by inserting the end portions of the under seal into the under seal holding grooves formed in the lower surface of the slider.

As seen in Fig. 5, the under seal 40 has attachment holes 46 for attaching the under seal 40 to the end cap 5, and not to the “outermost” portion of the guide member 6 (see Fig. 4). Accordingly, Osawa does not disclose the features of amended claim 1 in which the foreign matter entry preventing plates each have a length “equal to a distance between outermost ones of said attachment devices” and further in which the opposite ends of the foreign matter entry preventing plates are “secured to the outermost ones of said attachment devices. Osawa does not disclose this.

Furthermore, the Osawa reference also does not disclose the “plurality of attachment devices...mounted astride said track rail” as set forth in amended claim 1. Even the summary of the invention of Osawa (column 2, lines 13-15) discusses attaching an under seal to a lower portion of a slider, and not to the “outermost...attachment devices.” Accordingly, Osawa does not disclose each and every feature set forth in amended claim 1. Thus, amended claim 1 (and claim 6 dependent therefrom) cannot be anticipated by Osawa, since Osawa does not disclose each and every feature of amended claim 1.

In view of the amendments to the drawings, and claims, and the remarks set forth above, Applicants submit that the Examiner’s objection and rejections have been overcome. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the objection and rejections be withdrawn and that claims 1 and 3-8 be allowed.

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CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and accompanying remarks, it is submitted that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. A prompt and favorable reconsideration of the rejection and an indication of allowability of all pending claims are earnestly solicited.

If the Examiner believes that there are issues remaining to be resolved in this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite and complete prosecution of this case.

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,
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